

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 098138
ORIGIN IO-04

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /005 R

66011

DRAFTED BY: IO/HDC:JJBUCZACKI:DD

APPROVED BY: IO/HDC:FGAULDFELDT

-----301111Z 078983 /23

R 300631Z APR 77

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

INFO USMISSION GENEVA 8587

UNCLAS STATE 098138

FOLLOWING TEL SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO LIMA FROM LA PAZ
APRIL 28:

QUOTE UNCLAS LA PAZ 3147

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SNAR, BL

SUBJECT: GOB ACTIONS IN LAW ENFORCEMENT AND COCA CROP
DIVERSIFICATION

1. DURING THE PAST TWO WEEKS THE BOLIVIAN NARCOTICS
BUREAU, DNSP, HAS ARRESTED 31 BOLIVIANS AND FOUR COLOMBIANS ON
NARCOTICS CHARGES. DNSP HAS SEIZED ELEVEN KILOS OF COCAINE
AND ONE KILO OF MARIHUANA. IN ADDITION, THREE WEAPONS
AND ONE VEHICLE WERE SEIZED FROM ALLEGED TRAFFICKERS.
COLONAL APARICIO, DIRECTOR OF DNSP, HAS ANNOUNCED THAT
NARCOTICS TRAFFICKERS ARE SEEKING TO SELL DRUGS TO BOLIVIAN
SCHOOL CHILDREN AND A CRACKDOWN ON THESE ELEMENTS IS UNDER
WAY.

2. ON APRIL 25 IN THE CHAPARE AND ON APRIL 27 IN LA PAZ,
SENIOR BOLIVIAN AUTHORITIES HELD LARGE MEETINGS WITH
CAMPESINOS AND CAMPESINO LEADERS TO DESCRIBE GOB STEPS TOWARD
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DIVERSIFICATION AWAY FROM COCA PRODUCTION. THE MINISTER OF
AGRICULTURE WAS THE PRINCIPAL SPEAKER AT BOTH RALLIES AND
SOUGHT TO PRESENT A BALANCED VIEW OF OFFICIAL BOLIVIAN
EFFORTS GRADUALLY TO SHIFT AGRICULTURE AWAY FROM COCA LEAF.
COLONEL APARACIO ALSO SPOKE AT BOTH RALLIES. THE OFFICIALS
DESCRIBED THE NEWLY CREATED ENTITY WHICH WILL BE IN CHARGE
OF THE DIVERSIFICATION EFFORTS IN CHAPARE AND YUNGAS. IN

THAT CONNECTION, A SUPREME DECREE HAS BEEN ISSUED, ACCORDING TO THE PRESS, BRINGING INTO BEING THIS AGRICULTURAL ORGANIZATION WHICH IS AUTONOMOUS FROM THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND PARALLEL WITH DNSP. THE DIRECTOR OF THE NEW ENTITY IS WINSTON ESTREMADOIRO, A HIGHLY QUALIFIED AGRICULTURE ECONOMIST AND GRADUATE OF AN AMERICAN UNIVERSITY.

OBSERVERS AT THE TWO RALLIES REPORT THAT THERE IS MISUNDERSTANDING, SUSPICION, AND SOME RESISTANCE TO THE GOB'S PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED DIVERSIFICATION EFFORT. THE MINISTER AND COLONEL APARACIO ANNOUNED THAT A REGISTRY OF PRODUCERS AND THEIR FARMS WILL GET UNDER WAY PROMPTLY. THIS ACTION, THE CAMPESINOS SUSPECT, WILL LEAD TO FORCED REDUCTION OF THEIR COCA PRODUCTION AND POSSIBLE LOSS OF INCOME.

3. COMMENT: ACTIONS BY THE GOB IN RECENT DAYS SUGGEST CLEARLY THAT THE COMMITMENT TO EXPAND LAW ENFORCEMENT AND CROP DIVERSIFICATION IS BEING CARRIED OUT. THE GOB DEVELOPED THE RALLIES OF THE CAMPESINOS ON ITS OWN INITIATIVE AND IS CONFRONTING THE POLITICAL RISKS OF ITS RELATIONS WITH FARMERS IN THE COA-PRODUCING AREAS WITH EVIDENT VIGOR. UNDERLYING THE GOB EFFORTS IS US FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE. WHILE THE BOLIVIANS KNOW THAT THE AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES ARE NOW CHARACTERIZED AS PILOT PROJECTS AND MUST SHOW POSITIVE RESULTS, THEY ARE NONETHELESS STIMULATED TO MOVE BY THE ASSURANCE OF THE CLEAR US COMMITMENT TO CONTINUE TO COOPERATE WITH THEM IN BOTH LAW ENFORCEMENT AND AGRICULTURAL DIVERSIFICATION EFFORTS. THE PROSPECTS OF EVENTUALLY TAPPING THE POTENTIAL FUNDING OF \$45 MILLION OF AID CONCESSIONAL LOAN FUNDS FOR AGRICULTURAL ASSISTANCE

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TO POOR FARMERS IN THE COCA-GROWING AREAS IS A KEY FEATURE IN MOTIVATING THE GOB TO KEEP UP ITS EFFORTS AND EXPAND THEM AGAINST TRAFFICKING AND COCA PRODUCTION. STEDMAN UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, COCA, DRUG SEIZURES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 30-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE098138
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: IO/HDC:JJBUCZACKI:DD
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770151-1251
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t1977041/aaaaaajk.tel
Line Count: 101
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 7bdb309b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN IO
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2657295
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GOB ACTIONS IN LAW ENFORCEMENT AND COCA CROP DIVERSIFICATION
TAGS: SNAR, BL
To: GENEVA
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/7bdb309b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009